

## MINISTRY TEAMS

### CONNECTION BUILDING MINISTRY TEAM

As with other ministry teams, the Connection Building Ministry Team is waiting for new team members to begin the process of defining the team's goals within the synod's revitalization program and in conjunction with the synod's vision to

- provide ways for congregations to share resources, learning, challenges and opportunities.
- assist congregations and other agencies of ministry to employ effective means of communication.
- facilitate communication and mutual accountability among the various ministries and institutions of the church and with our ecumenical partners.

In addition to the synod website, a social network called "God's Work. Our Hands" Lutherans in Northeastern Pennsylvania has been started. Similar to Facebook, "God's Work. Our Hands" is a network of all things Lutheran in Northeastern Pennsylvania. Members of the network can

- post photos and videos of life in your congregation, youth group, mission district or the synod.
- post events that are happening in the congregation, youth group, mission district or the synod.
- post links to interesting stuff about faith or mission.
- post thoughts or comments on your faith life, faith journey, prayer, scripture, mission.

*Roxanne M. Kringle, convener*

### LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT MINISTRY TEAM

The Leadership Development Ministry Team met faithfully throughout the year to uphold the synodical priority "We will develop leaders for a new church in a new world." What an awesome task we as a synod and a synod team have before us. Developing leaders both rostered and lay for ministry in this ever changing world can be an overwhelming task. We need to continue to communicate with each other in order to provide relevant and timely educational opportunities. Please stop by our display and chat with us about your ideas for developing leaders!

*1. Help congregations to identify, equip and support lay leaders*

- The team supports a biannual workshop for congregational council secretaries to equip them with the necessary information and skills that they need for ministry in their congregational setting.
- The team supports a grant process for lay leaders to match continuing education funds. (We plan on beginning this project in 2011 if finances are available.)

#### *2. Equip and support rostered and other leaders for ministry needs*

- The team supports a grant process for rostered leaders to match continuing education funds.
- The team is exploring ways of supporting congregations and rostered leaders through Mutual Ministry committees.
- The team maintained new salary guidelines for rostered leaders.
- The team will post reading lists from colleagues on our website.

#### *3. Intentionally seek out candidates for rostered leadership*

- The team supports the Theological Education with Youth (TEY) program through scholarships available to NEPS youth attending the Summer Theological Academy. The team continues to strengthen ties with the TEY programs.
- The team commits itself to representation at every synodical youth event for the sake of sharing in conversation about discernment.
- The team continues to be in conversation and partnership with Project Connect. Project Connect is a program of the Eastern Cluster of Lutheran Seminaries and is funded by the Lilly Endowment. Its purpose is to encourage young adults to consider a vocation in public ministry.

#### *4. Provide or insure support for the families of rostered leaders*

- The team along with Family Life Services and mission district leaders is working to provide Pastoral Care Team ministry for rostered leaders and their families. Currently two mission districts (East Berks Mission District and Northern Lehigh Valley Mission District) are enjoying this program. Two additional mission districts (Scranton/Wilkes Barre Mission District and West Berks Mission District) have been identified and are working toward providing Pastoral Care Team ministry for their rostered leaders and their families. We look forward to working with the other five mission districts in the future.

Many thanks to the current team members for their hard work and dedication to developing leaders for a new church in a new world; the Rev. Peter Bredlau; the Rev. Greg Frey; the Rev. Kurt Garbe; tyna Kaltenbaugh; Russel Kaufman; the Rev. Michael Scholtes, and the Rev. Mark Wimmer.

A special thanks to Pastor Peter Bredlau and tyna Kaltenbaugh for their faithful service to this team. We will miss your 'words of wisdom' as we wish

you well on your new endeavors. I also would like to give a personal word of thanks to all the members of the team and especially Pastor Kurt Garbe who has been a tremendous support to me as I convened the Leadership Development Team for the past seven years. I leave this team one year prior to the completion of my term in order to serve on the new synodical team focusing on youth and family ministries.

*Kathleen M. Schaeffer, convener*

## 2011 MINIMUM COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

At the request of the 1983 convention of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, LCA, the former Professional Development Committee created annual "*Minimum Base Salary Guidelines*" for pastors and lay rostered leaders. The following guidelines are recommended by the Leadership Development Team for the approval of the 2010 Assembly of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA.

These guidelines represent a 2% increase over 2010.

### PARISH PASTORS 2011 Minimum Salary Guidelines

**Resolved that:**

**1) The 2011 *minimum* base salary for pastors in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA be in agreement with the following guidelines:**

| Years completed service in ordained ministry | Recommended Salary Range (including housing allowance) |   |        | Recommended Salary Range (parsonage provided) |   |        |
|--|--|---|--------|---|---|--------|
| 0 - 1  | 48,695   | - | 53,564 | 33,845  | - | 37,229 |
| 2 - 3  | 49,775   | - | 54,752 | 34,925  | - | 38,417 |
| 4 - 7  | 50,855   | - | 55,940 | 36,005  | - | 39,605 |
| 8 - 10                                       | 53,015   | - | 58,316 | 38,165  | - | 41,981 |
| 11 - 15                                      | 54,635   | - | 65,562 | 39,785  | - | 43,763 |
| 16 - 20                                      | 57,335   | - | 68,802 | 42,485  | - | 50,982 |
| 21 +   | 60,035   | - | 78,045 | 45,185  | - | 58,740 |

**Note:** These figures include a Social Security Allowance equal to one half of the pastor's social security liability. They should therefore be compared to the figures for total defined compensation in years prior to 2008. This allowance is taxable for income tax purposes. For 2011, the Social Security liability is expected to be equal to 15.3% of the combined base salary and housing provision. (Parsonages are valued at the fair rental value of the house for tax purposes.)

**2) It is the responsibility of each congregation to provide housing for its pastor(s). This may be accomplished in either of two ways:**

**a) Housing Allowance. A portion of the pastor's salary may be designated as a housing allowance. This amount will vary, depending upon location and the needs of the pastor. Congregations and pastors should check current tax laws in establishing this figure. This amount should be established before the beginning of each year by a resolution of the Congregation Council or the listing of an amount in the congregation's budget.**

b) **Parsonage**. This is free use of a church-owned house, including utilities. A portion of the pastor's base salary may be set aside for furnishings and other housing expenses according to the IRS code. An annual equity allowance of a minimum of 3%-5% of salary is recommended for all parsonage situations.

3) Congregations should remember that the figures in the grid are *minimums*. Congregations are encouraged to exceed these minimum guidelines. Additional compensation should be provided based on criteria such as continuing education, special skills, responsibilities, merit, and local conditions.

4) Each congregation shall establish a Mutual Ministry Committee to facilitate the discussion by which these criteria are evaluated (as well as for carrying out the other functions of mutual ministry).

5) A congregation that fails to meet the synodical guidelines shall submit a report to the bishop on a form to be provided, detailing the reasons why these minimums are not being met and the steps that will be taken to establish these minimums as soon as possible.

The following minimum benefits should be provided in addition to salary:

1) An **Automobile Allowance** equal to IRS guidelines per mile for business travel. Pastors reimbursed for auto expense on a per mile basis do not have to report this allowance as income if they submit written mileage reports to the calling institution.

2) **Continuing Education** provisions including a congregation/agency providing at least \$550 for tuition, books, etc., and two weeks of time (not vacation), and the pastor providing at least \$250. It is recommended that this money be deposited in the synod's PACE program. (Programs that include Sundays must be negotiated with the congregation council.) It is encouraged that congregations/agencies and pastors work towards a partnership goal of \$1,000.

3) Four full weeks of **vacation** time annually.

4) One to two **days off** per week, and, at least once a month, two consecutive days off.

5) For the purposes of **Worker's Compensation**, pastors are considered to be employees of the congregation and therefore should be included in Worker's Compensation insurance.

6) **Health and pension benefits** according to the guidelines of the ELCA, including a 12% pension provision.

7) Congregations may also reimburse the pastor(s) for **professional expenses** such as dues, entertainment, supplies, and malpractice insurance.

### **PASTORS WITH PART TIME CALLS**

Pastors with part time calls should be compensated on a prorated basis in line with the above guidelines, in consultation with the Office of the Bishop. Vacation and continuing education provisions should be prorated, as well. Pension and health benefits are according to the guidelines of the ELCA, including a 12% pension provision.

### **ROSTERED LAY LEADERS 2011 Minimum Salary Guidelines**

**Resolved that:**

1) The 2011 *minimum* salary for rostered lay leaders in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA be in agreement with the following guidelines:

| Years completed service in rostered ministry | Recommended Salary Range Bachelor's Degree |   |        | Recommended Salary Range Master's Degree |   |        |
|--|--|---|--------|--|---|--------|
|  |  |   |        |  |   |        |
| 0 – 1  | 30,841                                     | - | 33,925 | 33,100                                   | - | 36,410 |
| 2 - 3  | 31,921                                     | - | 35,113 | 34,842                                   | - | 38,326 |
| 4 - 7  | 33,001                                     | - | 36,301 | 35,922                                   | - | 39,514 |
| 8 - 10                                       | 35,161                                     | - | 38,677 | 38,082                                   | - | 41,890 |
| 11 - 15                                      | 36,781                                     | - | 44,137 | 39,702                                   | - | 47,642 |
| 16 - 20                                      | 39,481                                     | - | 47,377 | 42,402                                   | - | 50,882 |
| 21 +   | 42,181                                     | - | 54,835 | 45,102                                   | - | 58,633 |

2) Congregations should remember that the figures in the grid are *minimums*. Congregations are encouraged to exceed these minimum guidelines. Additional compensation should be provided based on criteria such as continuing education, special skills, responsibilities, merit, and local conditions.

3) Each congregation shall establish a Mutual Ministry Committee to facilitate the discussion by which these criteria are evaluated (as well as for carrying out the other functions of mutual ministry).

4) A congregation that fails to meet the synodical guidelines shall submit a report to the bishop on a form to be provided, detailing the reasons why these minimums are not being met and the steps that will be taken to establish these minimums as soon as possible.

The following *minimum* benefits should be provided in addition to salary:

1) An **Automobile Allowance** equal to IRS guidelines per mile for business travel. Rostered lay leaders reimbursed for auto expense on a per mile basis do not have to report this allowance as income if they submit written mileage to the calling institution.

2) **Continuing Education** provisions including a congregation/agency providing at least \$550 for tuition, books, etc., and two weeks of time (not vacation), and the leader providing at least \$250. It is recommended that this money be deposited in the synod's PACE program. (Programs that include Sundays must be negotiated with the congregation council.) It is encouraged that congregations/agencies and rostered lay professional leaders work towards a partnership goal of \$1,000.

3) Four full weeks of **vacation** time annually.

4) One to two **days off** per week, and, at least once a month, two consecutive days off.

5) For the purposes of **Worker's Compensation**, rostered lay leaders are considered to be employees of the congregation and therefore should be included in Worker's Compensation insurance.

6) **Health and pension benefits** according to the guidelines of the ELCA, including a 12% pension provision.

7) Congregations may also reimburse the lay leader(s) for **professional expenses** such as dues, entertainment, supplies, and malpractice insurance.

#### WITNESS AND SERVICE MINISTRY TEAM

The Witness and Service team aims to help the individuals and congregations in our synod to live into our purpose statement:

*Encountering and sharing God's word of love given in Jesus Christ—encouraging lives of service.*

Helping to accomplish this goal are the many groups that find affiliation under the W&S umbrella: Parish Nurse Task Force, Gay-Lesbian Task Force the Accessibility Team and the World Hunger Team.

Much of this team's work involves awarding grants to ministries throughout the synod that seek to share the Gospel through word and service. In

2009 a total of \$35,000 was distributed to a variety of ministries—food pantries and summer day camps, a free dental clinic and a prayer shawl ministry, programs for children and programs for the elderly, ministries in the inner city and ministries in the rural areas of our synod, a disaster relief mission trip and campus ministry projects, and an exciting new outreach ministry developed by young adults for their peers.

These grants provide supplementary funds to begin new long-term ministries or additional funds for special events or short-term ministries. Members of the W&S team are blessed to read through the grant applications and hear of the creative ways in which congregations are reaching out to share the gospel through ministries of witness and service.

During the last year, we have been looking for new ways to engage congregations in ministries that are particularly about sharing the Gospel with those who don't know the love of God in Christ Jesus. We held a workshop at the Synod Assembly to inspire creative ideas for ministry and help congregations have access to grant money to fund these projects. We are changing the way that we run meetings and inviting more people from across the synod to join the conversation about how and why we share the Good News with our neighbors. Please join us in this conversation—we would love to have insights from all over our synod and inspire new ideas in our congregations.

I am blessed to serve with the W&S team members, whose energy and enthusiasm for these ministries bring great joy to our work: Dawn Baxter (Synod Council), Mike Bennethum (synod staff liaison), Paulette Obrecht (synod liaison), Mary Wolfe, Keith Rohrbach, Barry Mitchell, Martin Milne, David Hill, and Ann Melot.

*Amy Jahn de Torrez, convener*

### **WORSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY MINISTRY TEAM**

With all of the wonderful feedback provided by the people of the synod, the Worship and Spirituality Team has been in an exciting process of redeveloping our goals and rethinking our ministry. The synod will feel the impact of this reflection in the coming year.

In addition to creating vibrant worship at the Synod Assembly, the team will be offering synod-wide worship opportunities for rostered leaders, other church leaders, their families, and anyone in the synod who loves to worship. The first of these will be in the fall of 2010 and will provide opportunities for all of the synod's various worship leaders

to take some time away from leading worship services so they may experience worship.

The team continues to explore the possibility of offering further education to our congregational musicians. Right now the team is exploring the possibility of holding workshops throughout the various mission districts that will enrich the knowledge and passion of our congregational musicians. The team is open to suggestions for topics and hopes to start these educational opportunities in the fall of 2010. These educational opportunities will also provide a platform upon which congregational musicians may ask questions of the Worship and Spirituality Team to help them in their various ministries in the congregation.

Marlane Druckenmiller continues to be our synod's Book of Faith advocate and we continue to support her and her ministry of helping congregations open up the scriptures.

Once again, the synod's annual Learning Ministries Day, held this year on January 23 at Atonement Lutheran Church in Wyomissing, PA, emphasized the Book of Faith initiative. It was planned by the Faith Formation Resource Team and featured the wisdom of Rolf Jacobson (author of "Crazy Talk") as he led the gathering through an exploration of the Psalms.

With the Book of Faith initiative in mind, the team looks forward to a year that focuses on scripture and song. This focus will shape our ministry to the synod and will provide great opportunities for people to deepen their lives of worship and spirituality.

Members of the Worship and Spirituality Team this year included: Jira Albers, Randeke Albers, Joy Gerhart, Amanda Tompkins, Rändel Wolfe, and Dale Zmijewski.

New members who will be joining us include: Linda Maule, Jean Grube, Doug Holtz, and our synod's two new PEWs (Partners in Evangelical Worship) Melanie Werley, and Charlie Grube.

*Jira Albers, convener*

### **ACCESSIBILITY MINISTRIES TEAM The "A Team"**

The mission of the "A Team" is to "assist congregations to open their hearts, minds, and doors to all of God's people by removing barriers of architecture, communication, and attitudes that exclude any person from full and active participation in the life of Christ's Church." The Team met seven times last year, and provided:

- + the "Full Access: Scripture and Christian Education" Learning Ministries Day workshop;
- + a Synod Assembly display of accessibility resources;
- + a 4-part LIFT workshop on ministry to people with mental, physical, and sensory challenges, and a LIFT display;
- + Accessibility Sunday (2nd Sunday in October) resources in a synod mailing;
- + several synod e-news appeals for congregations' accessibility stories and pictures;
- + continued development of the list of 52 'Accessibility Hot Spot' congregations gathered at synod events as a contact resource for other congregations working on 'accessibility';
- + monitoring of the accessibility resources linked on the Synod website.

Our team convener moved out of our synod. Pr. Bill Horn is the new convener. Member Pr. David Volk passed away. Dennis Oberholtzer joined the team. Other members are Pr. Jeanne Beadle; Barbara Hartman; Pr. John Keiter; Pr. David Kistler; Carolyn Volk; and Mary Smith, Emeritus. New members would be welcome. A person to represent persons with visual challenges is needed.

*William Horn, convener*

## CANDIDACY COMMITTEE

The Candidacy Committee continues to be a group of committed leaders who give generously of their time to help provide care and guidance for individuals preparing to become rostered church leaders, both lay and ordained. In 2009-2010 thirty-four candidates were involved in the candidacy process. At this time we have six additional students who have begun the application process with the hope of starting seminary in the fall of 2010. Thanks to your mission support and grants from the Student Education and Prosser funds, over \$40,500 was spent to help our students in the preparation process. The outlay for one full year at seminary, including all living costs, is estimated at around \$36,000. When you consider that most of our students begin seminary with undergraduate student loans you can see how important it is that we do all we can to try to raise additional funds to help minimize additional loans. Thank you to all the congregations who made special gifts this year. If you or your congregation would be interested in making contributions, please contact me in the synod office.

I want to take this opportunity to express sincere thanks to Pastor John Richter who has served as

Candidacy Committee Chair. It is not simply *that* he served but the *way* in which he served that has helped our committee function with care and commitment as we seek to be responsible to the mission of our synod and the church at large. We wish him well as he moves into new responsibilities now as chair of the LTSP Board of Trustees.

I thank Pastor Peter Kuritz for his faithful service on the committee over the past ten years. He brought sensitivity to our mix that guided us in our deliberations as we sought to be present for each student. And finally we thank Robert Femovich for lending his gifts and deep commitment to the workings of our group. We give thanks that together we balance ourselves to be a reflection of all the people who are our synod.

We welcome Susan Schellenberg to the position of committee chair. She has been a long-time member of the committee and brings her gifts of organization and dedication to this new role among us.

The members of the Candidacy Committee, in addition to our meetings, take a great deal of time both in preparation for our gatherings and in consultation with the students. They continue to do so with integrity and compassion. They are required to make very difficult decisions at times for the good of all who are involved. Their determination to be responsive to the needs of each individual while taking seriously the leadership needs of the church is a clear indication of just how seriously they take their responsibilities.

At our Approval Retreat in November of 2009, the Candidacy Committee approved Cinda Brucker, Bradley Burke, Dan Caruso, Tim Garman, Eric Moser, Barry Spatz, and Scott Staub for ordination, pending the receipt and acceptance of a proper call. Aaron Decker was approved for ordination at our January 11 meeting, pending his receipt and acceptance of a proper call.

**Cinda J. Brucker** is a member of St. John, Sayre. She received her Bachelor of Science Degree from Thiel College, Greenville, PA in 1972; a Master of Arts in Lay Ministry from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 2002; and, a Master of Divinity Degree from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 2010. She completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at Lancaster General Hospital, Lancaster, and did her internship at Trinity Lutheran Church in Butler, PA.

**Bradley R. Burke** is a member of St. Marks Community Lutheran, Reeders, PA. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from the University of Scranton, Scranton in 2006, and a Master of Di-

vinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 2010. He completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at Abington Memorial Hospital, Abington, PA and did his internship at St. Timothy, Aston, PA.

**Daniel J. Caruso, Jr.** is a member of Christ, Conyngham. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from SUNY University at Buffalo, Buffalo, NY, and a Master of Divinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 2010. He completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at Phoebe Ministries, Allentown, PA, and did his internship at St. Paul, Dallas.

**Aaron J. Decker** is a member of Zion, Shoemakersville. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Albright College, Reading, PA in 2005, and a Master of Divinity from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago in 2010. He completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at Penn Foundation, Sellersville, PA, and did his internship at First Lutheran Church, Omaha, NE.

**Timothy R. Garman** is a member of Allegheny, Knauers (Alleghenyville). He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Ursinus College, Collegeville, PA in 2006, and a Master of Divinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 2010. He completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at Phoebe Ministries, Allentown, PA, and did his internship at Nativity, Reading.

**Eric R. Moser** is a member of St. John, Boyertown. He received his Bachelor of Arts Degree from Kutztown University, Kutztown, PA in 2004, and a Master of Divinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Gettysburg in 2010. He completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at Milton S. Hershey Medical Center, Hershey, PA, and did his internship at Lakeside Lutheran Church, Littleton, NC.

**Barry L. Spatz** is a member of Salem Belleman's Union Church, Mohrsville. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from Albright College, Reading, PA in 2005, and a Master of Divinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 2010. He completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education at Reading Hospital and Medical Center, Reading, PA, and did his internship at Huffs Union Church, Alburtis, PA.

**Scott A. Staub** is a member of St. John, Boyertown. He received his Bachelor of Science Degree from the University of Phoenix, Wayne, PA in 2006, and a Master of Divinity from The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia in 2010. He completed a quarter of Clinical Pastoral Education

at Reading Hospital and Medical Center, Reading, PA, and did his internship at Christ, Allentown.

In November, 2009, the Candidacy Committee also approved Carol Koch for commissioning as an Associate in Ministry, pending the receipt and acceptance of a proper call.

**Carol A. Koch** is a member of Trinity, Wernersville. She received a Bachelor of Science degree from Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, PA in 1963, and fulfilled her requirements to become an Associate in Ministry through Select Courses as well as courses at The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia. Her fieldwork was done at Trinity, Wernersville.

I challenge you to continue to encourage those around you whom you see exhibiting gifts for rostered ministry. It is often the case that young people begin to think about serving God in those years when we have them in Confirmation Ministry. Your words of guidance and support can help them to begin to seek God's will for their lives.

*Mary W. Gade, synod staff*

## CAMPUS MINISTRY

Lutheran ministries are present on college and university campuses in our synod, sharing the Gospel through word and deed with the whole campus community. The primary outreach is through Partner Congregations, congregations that minister to and with a college or university in their area. These are ministries such as St. Peter's, Bethlehem – related to Lehigh University; Union, Schnecksville – related to Lehigh Carbon Community College; and Trinity, Kutztown and St. John, Kutztown – related to Kutztown University. Two other ministries work in our synod: the Chapel at Muhlenberg College, an ELCA-related college, and Campus Ministries of Northeast PA, an ecumenical ministry that works cooperatively with synod congregations in the northern part of the synod.

The Campus Ministry Affinity Group meets regularly for mutual support and conversation about the synod vision for campus ministries. The Affinity Group seeks to support existing Partner Congregations, maintains a website for congregations and students, and identifies Lutheran students in synod colleges and universities.

Synod funding for Campus Ministry comes from congregation benevolence to the synod and ELCA, and is distributed by the Witness and Service team to the Campus Ministry Affinity Group.

Congregations and ministries that wish to receive funding should contact the Campus Ministry Affinity Group at [www.nepacampusministry.org](http://www.nepacampusministry.org). In 2009, the internal grant program distributed gifts to students at Kutztown University and Muhlenberg College to support Alternative Spring Break service trips to Houston and Washington DC, and Friedens Lutheran Church, Oley to support a congregation program with college students.

If you or your congregation would like to become involved in campus ministry, please contact the Rev. Peter Bredlau, group convener or the group at [www.nepacampusministry.org](http://www.nepacampusministry.org). For more information about ELCA Campus Ministries, check <http://www.elca.org/Growing-In-Faith/Ministry/Campus-Ministry.aspx>.

*The Campus Ministry Affinity Group*

### **GAY/LESBIAN MINISTRY TASK FORCE**

All are Welcome at the Cross

As part of our ongoing mandate from the synod, the task force is seeking to expand the number of congregations on our territory who wish to follow the synod's example of welcoming and full inclusion by declaring themselves to be *Reconciling in Christ*. We are always available to meet with individuals or committees from congregations interested in receiving more information concerning the process. This year we have made several such connections and the process is ongoing.

We continue to urge all individuals in the synod to make a personal commitment to welcoming and full inclusion by declaring themselves Reconciling Lutherans. Forms for participating in this program are always available at our displays or by contacting the task force.

As a result of the changes made at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly, the task force is available to meet with congregations to discuss those changes as they impact on the local level.

The task force will be participating in the 2011 LIFT event at Muhlenberg College. The first two LIFT events were inspiring and exciting and we are looking forward to next year's edition.

Another event in which the task force has participated was the NEPS *Jesus Calls Us . . . to Action* Advocacy Day, a highly successful and informative day of workshops and sessions highlighting the need for us as Lutherans to "walk the walk".

As always, anyone who shares our aims and goals and wishes to help in their achievement is

most welcome to join us on the task force. We meet monthly at synod headquarters. New ideas, visions, and perspectives keep our work fresh and vital. By contacting the synod office, or visiting our display at Synod Assembly, you can express your interest and receive more information.

*Bob Hensley, chair*

### **GLOBAL MISSION**

Global Mission in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod is handled by four sub-committees (one for each of our four Companion Synods). Each sub-committee meets regularly and functions in the way that best serves that sub-committee.

#### **Slovenia**

Having hosted ten teenagers from Slovenia in homes throughout the territory of our synod in 2009, this year will see a "return visit" of nine teens and two adult chaperones to the Prekmurje area of Slovenia (the area where Lutheran families are concentrated in that country!). We are pleased to be sending an excellent group of young people from all over the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod. The list includes the following: Nathaniel Campia (Youth Advisor, St. John Windish, Bethlehem), Schyler Cordova (Dinkey Memorial, Ashfield), Ben Frederick (Holy Trinity, Kingston), Tori Geiger (St. Peter, Bethlehem), Philip Kaufman (St. Paul, Mountaintop), Samantha Kucsan (St. John Windish, Bethlehem), Allison Monroe (Emmanuel's, Emanuelsville), Cora Monroe (Emmanuel's, Emanuelsville), and Jenna Weiss (St. John Windish, Bethlehem). Adult Chaperones for this trip are Dave and Lynne Ambrose (Emmanuel's, Emanuelsville). Our youth exchange team will depart for Slovenia on June 28 and return to the United States on July 19, having spent three weeks with host families in this small, new democracy which once was part of Yugoslavia. Slovenia is bordered on the south by Croatia, on the east by Hungary, on the north by Austria and on the west by Italy and the Adriatic Sea. One of the most prosperous of the new democracies in Europe, Slovenia is a member of the European Union and NATO. Without a doubt, it is one of the best kept secrets in all of Europe. It is a land of unsurpassed beauty and warm people who are known for their excellent food and generous hospitality.

The Slovenia Companion Church Committee would love to increase its ranks. If you would be interested in becoming a member of our team, please contact Pastor Kurt Garbe at the Hazleton Synod Office or me at [pastor@stjohnswindish.org](mailto:pastor@stjohnswindish.org).

*Gary Langensiepen, chair*

## South Central Diocese, ELC Tanzania

The South Central Diocese Companion Synod Team has been busy in 2009 continuing to strengthen our companionship with our brothers and sisters in Tanzania.

At LIFT in June we were part of the Global Mission Presentation during the workshop time.

St. Paul's, Fleetwood, coordinated a trip in September 2009 and invited other companion congregations to send people to visit their companions in Tanzania. Twenty-two people attended the trip representing five companion congregations. Each congregation's delegation was able to spend time with their companions to enhance their relationships.

A Youth Servant trip is scheduled for June 2010. Eight youth, two young adults, and three chaperones will be involved. This is the second Youth Servant Trip to the South Central Diocese. These trips help to broaden our perspectives on the world and to give us first-hand knowledge of the culture of our companions. We can learn so much about our faith as we travel, interact, learn from, and work with members of the SCD.

At this time we are looking forward to having the ELCA Global Mission Regional Representatives for Tanzania, JMe and Bob Lowden, visit our Synod Assembly to bring greetings to us from our Tanzanian companions and to speak on their ministry.

Look for information later this summer as we put together packets for your congregation to celebrate Global Mission Sunday on October 3, 2010. We hope to include worship helps including prayers, hymns, and sermon ideas from all of our Companion Synods.

We have also received several inquiries from congregations in our synod seeking information on how to become a companion with a congregation in the SCD. If your congregation is interested in being a companion to a congregation of the South Central Diocese, please be in contact with the Synod Office or me.

I also want to thank everyone on our Tanzania Team for all their hard work and effort in making this a successful companionship year.

*Russell Haab, chair*

## Saxony, Germany

The Saxony Companion Synod Committee is responsible to relate to our Companion Synod in Saxony. The early part of 2009 was spent reviewing the 2008 Youth Exchange with the Borna and Lobau-Zittau Districts. We also spent a great deal of time preparing for the Intergenerational Exchange with the Lobau-Zittau District in October 2009. Sixteen people spent 10 days visiting with us. The first five days were spent in the Mountain Top-Hazleton area. Highlights were a day in Jim Thorpe, Hickory Run State Park, and two days in New York City. A Saturday seminar was held in Reading followed by a trip to Trappe. The group also spent five days in Valley View which included two days in Gettysburg and Washington, DC.

We are looking forward to a visit from youth from the Lobau-Zittau District to visit us in October 2010. We are hoping to visit Saxony in October 2011. Anyone interested in serving on our committee or in participating in our exchanges should contact Wayne or Michele Kaufman, or Pastor Kurt Garbe.

*Wayne and Michele Kaufman, co-chairs*

Together as companion synods, companion congregations, and partners in Global Mission, we will continue to meet the changes, challenges, and mission and ministry opportunities that God blesses us with on our faith journey.

*Kurt E. Garbe, staff liaison*